United Nations

Press Release

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council unanimously extends mandate of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for another period of six months, until 20 November; also unanimously enlarges and prolongs mandate of Angola Verification Mission in light of peace accords.

- Secretary-General, in Lisbon for signing of Angolan accords, holds talks with Prime Minister of Portugal.

- Iraq protests against "unprecedented" Security Council decision to establish Compensation Fund to pay for damages resulting from invasion of Kuwait.

- Secretary-General welcomes request of Democratic People's Republic of Korea to seek United Nations membership.

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The Security Council late this afternoon voted unanimously to extend the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for another period of six months until 20 November.

The Council President, Li Daoyu of China, said in a statement on behalf of members of the Council that "despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syrian sector, the situation in the Middle East as a whole continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached".

The Council then in a second meeting unanimously decided to extend and enlarge the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), to be called "UNAVEM II", to enable it to carry out new verification tasks arising from the Peace Accords for Angola. The Mission will operate until the general elections planned for 30 November 1992.

In an addendum to his report to the Council, the Secretary-General said UNAVEM II must be given sufficient logistical support -- including a reliable

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communications system and adequate air and ground transportation facilities to enable it to take on its new tasks. He estimated that the total cost of the Mission from June 1991 until November 1992 would be about $132 million -- an expense to be borne by Member countries of the United Nations.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar met today in Lisbon with the Prime Minister of Portugal, Anibal Cavaco Silva. The Secretary-General is scheduled to witness tomorrow the signing of the peace accords between the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA)

During the meeting today, he reviewed with the Portuguese Prime Minister international issues of mutual interest. They discussed, in particular, the Angolan agreement as well as the role entrusted to the United Nations as a result of that agreement. They also discussed the Iraq-Kuwait situation, the problem of the Middle East and the question of East Timor.

Talking to the press after the meeting, the Secretary-General once again congratulated the Government of Portugal for its great diplomatic success in bringing about the signing of the "historic agreement", which was important not only for Africa but for the entire world community.

"This agreement will contribute to peace and development in southern Africa", the Secretary-General said, adding, "I also think that the signing of the accords tomorrow will be an example for other parts of Africa in demonstrating the need to find negotiated solutions to political problems." In that context, the Secretary-General cited the example of Mozambique, which also needed a political solution that would allow the Mozambicans to work together, as the Angolans had done, for the development and prosperity of their country.

Regarding the role of the United Nations in Angola, the Secretary-General recalled that UNAVEM I had overseen the withdrawal of Cuban troops, which had now been completed, but that UNAVEM II would be a much more complex operation.

During his three-week trip to Africa and Europe, the Secretary-General has already visited Morocco and Algeria. He has been in Portugal all week, but began his official visit to the country today.

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Iraq has lodged an official protest concerning the Security Council's decision to establish a Compensation Fund to handle claims for war damages caused by Iraq during its invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

In a letter to the President of the Security Council dated 27 May, Iraqi Foreign Minister Ahmed Hussein said the resolution indirectly gave the Council powers of disposal over the Iraqi people's oil resources. In so doing, he said, the United States and other States would thereby realize another

objective -- "the smashing of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the elimination of its right to control its oil resources and determines its exports of crude oil and petroleum products".

The Iraqi Foreign Minister said further that the Compensation Fund, which would be financed through a percentage of Iraqi oil export revenues, would result in the impovershment of the Iraqi people and future generations for decades to come. He called the decision to establish the Fund "unprecedented" with "no basis in the United Nations Charter or any international convention".

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A United Nations spokesman announced today that the Secretary-General had welcomed the request of Democratic People's Republic of Korea to seek membership in the United Nations.

In a statement, sent through a letter dated 28 May to inform the President of the Security Council of its intention, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said it hoped that the north and the south would occupy one seat at the United Nations with a single state name.

The Government said it would actively strive, on the United Nations rostrum, to see that the problem of Korea's reunification and international issues be resolved "in the interest of the nation and in conformity with the requirements of world peace and security".

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